Who do I want to be?

Transitioning from college to life after college is an exciting and challenging experience. Routines change, responsibilities change, old questions begin to be answered, new questions await an answer as new friends and great experiences await. We cannot predict every situation we will confront, but we can influence our future and we can determine the mindset we will take to respond to life’s gifts.

**Influence:** There is a significant difference between control and influence. It is virtually impossible to control any particular element of our life because we cannot anticipate those things that seem to come out of nowhere. But we can influence how we will prepare for and respond to the unknown. We can influence our health by eating, sleeping and exercising properly. We can influence the making of new friends by joining environments where we are more likely to meet new people. We can influence our personal growth by simply asking ourselves, “I wonder,” and then seek environments to investigate “I wonder.”

**Who do I want to be?** Please note there is a significant difference between “What do I want to be” and “Who do I want to be.” The “what” is typically considered to be your profession or position, whereas the “Who” is all about your character, your presence and how you influence the lives of others.

A very common, and unfortunate, approach to defining self comes about by measuring yourself to others based on surface impressions. You may have friends that seem to live a nicer life style than you, upscale apartment, travel and wardrobe. In these cases it is not uncommon for those people to possess large credit balances, whereas you may pay all your bills in full. Consider this: how much of what is posted on facebook is an accurate description of ones true life style and level of happiness?

Graduating from college does not mean we possess all the answers, but does give us greater ability to find those answers. Be comfortable with who and what you are and enjoy the process of learning about life. Steven Jobs defined this topic so well in his commencement speech at Stanford in 2004:

> Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life. Don’t be trapped by dogma – which is living with the results of other people’s thinking. Don’t let the noise of others’ opinions drown out your inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow know what you truly want to become.